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THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
AND THE
DOCTRINE OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

BY

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“Che quegli è tra gli stolti bene abbasso
Che senza distinzione afferma o niega
Così nell' un come nell' altro passo :
Perch' egli incontra che piu volte piega
L' opinion corrente in falsa parte
E poi l' affetto lo' ntelletto lega.”

DANTE, *Paradiso*, Canto xiii. 39, 40.

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PREFACE.

THE accompanying historical sketch is slightly extended from a Charge delivered to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Brechin, at the Annual Diocesan Synod on the 13th of September of this year. The author is aware that the treatment of such a subject in this manner cannot satisfy the rigor of method which so important a matter demands; at the same time, he has endeavoured to do justice on all sides.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE DOCTRINE OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

IT is the duty of a bishop of the Church of Christ to be "apt to teach," as the Apostle bears witness, and at his consecration he binds himself, so far as he can, "to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine." There are many points on which I might address you, were I to search out occasions for the exercise of this my office. In the surging ocean of human thought, errors and heresies float around us. Some deny the Lord who bought them, reducing the conception of His person to that of a deceived or deceiving man, like themselves; some assault the inspiration and authority of the divine oracles, submitting the very Word of God to sophistical and arbitrary criticism: a great materialistic school of science eliminates God out of His own creation; and that of Hegel, in its theory of evolution, has confounded the Creator with the work of His own hands. In professed antagonism to these, and with the view, among others, of meeting these errors, a Council has lately been held at Rome, and since prologued, whose claims upon the Christian world are so urgent, that no lover of his kind, no one charged with the care of immortal souls, can fail to appreciate its significance. It professes to cure some of the wounds of the age. Is it a healing balm, or does it meet one error by another? I feel sure that in view of the deep interest which the Council has excited, if for no

other reason, you will be glad to hear what your unworthy bishop has to say on the subject, and may he speak to you wisely, dispassionately, and truly!

Now it will be asked, What have we to do with this? What possible concern can we have in decrees which relate to a religious community from which Scotland separated in the year 1560? Let the Church of Rome consolidate her system, or stultify herself, as the case may be, without any concern of us. In reply to this, one must say—1st, That it is impossible for any one calling himself a Christian, not to be deeply concerned in the future of any branch of the great family of Faith, especially of such a body as the Roman Communion, which has occupied so prominent a place in the history of the world, which has exhibited such fruits of sanctity, and which at this moment, in its secular aspect, is the strongest political organization in the world. Although schisms and dissensions have torn the Body of Christ, we must still believe the truth in the Creed, that there is one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; and though we conscientiously cannot hold communion with Roman Catholics, on account of what we esteem to be very grievous errors, yet still we must remember that they and we are alike members of the one body—that if one member suffer, all suffer with it—and that it is our duty to pray for it and all other branches, and therefore to take interest in it and all other branches, in the intention of good Bishop Andrewes, who in his Devotions has given us this useful formula for our supplications in this matter:—

“ For the Catholic Church,
 its establishment and increase;
 for the Eastern,
 its deliverance and union;

for the Western,
its adjustment and peace ;
for the British,
the supply of what is wanting in it,
the strengthening of what remains in it."

A family is not the less one family because the members of it are not on speaking terms with each other.

But our concern in the fortunes of the Church of Rome is not a matter of Christian faith and duty only ; we must be concerned in her, whether we will or no. By her claim to universal domination, by her deep conviction, and by the expression of that conviction, that out of her pale there is no salvation for those who are not in invincible ignorance, every one is bound, as a prudent man, and with regard to the welfare of his own immortal soul, to examine that claim, and to give an account of the faith that is in him. The shallow, unbelieving last century settled the matter in a short and easy method satisfactory to itself—"Popery was a system of irrational dogmas, which no person in his right senses could believe. Those who accepted them were fools ; those who pretended to accept them were rogues. It was either a question of conscious deceit, or slavish fear, or mawkish sentimentality." But matters are very different now. In the midst of the light of the nineteenth century we have seen the remarkable fact of one mind of the very first order, and many others of power, learning, and refinement, drawn from very different schools of religious thought into communion with the Church of Rome ; we have seen a literature spring up remarkable for its fertility, and as a result there has been for the time a remarkable influx of converts, many of them respectable in every way.

I shall not detain you by attempting to account for this remarkable phenomenon beyond saying that many of the reasons lie on the surface. The dread of the democracy and lawlessness that is pervading European society is enough of itself to throw men on a system of absolute subordination and obedience. The declension of popular Protestantism among thinking men into Rationalism induces them to save their faith by an entire submission of the reason. The dryness and unimaginativeness of the official Anglicanism send men to a system where heart, and sense, and feeling meet with fuller satisfaction. The scandals in the English Church, the unwisdom and shortsightedness of the bishops, who seem disposed to mismanage the Oxford movement, just as their fathers maltreated Wesleyanism in the last century, and, lastly, the comfort of a system which saves men the trouble of thinking and judging, and which takes the responsibility of life much out of their hands, are all apparent reasons why, now that the penal laws are abrogated, they should freely embrace the religion of Rome.

But, 2nd, the concerns of the Church of Rome, and the action of the Vatican Council in particular, greatly concern us, in view of the attitude which the Church of England took at the Reformation, and continues to take now. Differing from the Protestant bodies in that she retained her ancient hierarchical organization, she felt compelled to cast off what she believed to be a usurped jurisdiction. Receiving her faith and her organization through St. Augustine from St. Gregory the Great, she owed a filial obedience to the great mother Church of the West; and had matters remained as that great and wise Pontiff arranged them, we should not have had this day to deplore in tears of compunc-

tion the rending of the vesture of Christ. But it was not so. In a measure, in consequence of the political necessities of the Western world on the fall of the Empire, the Pope, who already was the greatest land-owner in Italy^a, became a sovereign power; the heathen nations which were brought into the faith naturally referred to that centre whence they received the light of the Gospel; deep religious sentiments connected with the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul drew all Europe to the threshold of the Apostles, and then the action of a series of forged documents welded into the most binding of laws what hitherto had been the free religious sentiment of the peoples^b. The dominion of the earth, that had in heathen times rested on the seven hills, still retained the place of its habitation, but now stretched into the nobler dominion of Ideas. The Italian instinct for consolidating power exhibited itself in a series of singularly able Pontiffs, who improved every success and turned the flank of every opposition. The system of the Canon Law combined in a most marvellous manner the interests of

^a Döllinger's "Church and Churches," p. 336.

^b "On a sudden (in the reign of Nicolas I., ob. 867), was promulgated, unannounced, without preparation, not absolutely unquestioned, but apparently overawing at once all doubt, a new code, which to the former authentic documents added fifty-nine letters and decrees of the twenty oldest Popes, from Clement to Melchisedech, and the Donation of Constantine; and in the third part, among the decrees of the Popes and of the Councils from Silvester to Gregory II., thirty-nine false decrees, and the acts of several unauthentic Councils. In this vast manual of sacerdotal Christianity the Popes appear from the first the parents, guardians, and legislators of the faith throughout the world. The false Decretals do not merely assert the supremacy of the Popes, the dignity and privileges of the see of Rome, they comprehend the whole dogmatic system and discipline of the Church."—*History of Latin Christianity*, by Milman, vol. ii. p. 304.

this world and of the next^c, and the result was that a mighty power was erected in Rome, the natural

^c “All these doctrines (the infallibility and autoeracy of the Roman see) were extended and corroborated by another forgery. This was produced in 1150, by Gratian, a Benedictine monk of Bologna. It was entitled by him, *Concordantia discordantium Canonum*; but the name which has been assigned to it by common consent is ‘The Decree of Gratian’ (*Decretum Gratiani*). This work superseded every other compilation. It was explained in the schools, cited in the tribunals, and recognized everywhere as the sole authentic Collection of the Canon Law.” (p. 224.)

“Many collections were made of these papal edicts since the publication of Gratian’s work, but the only one of which the authority has continued to our time is that of Gregory IX., composed in 1234, by Raymond de Penafort, a Dominican monk of Catalonia. This contains all the decrees of the great Council of Lateran in 1215, and the decisions of the Popes on a vast number of subjects, distributed according to the subjects into five books. The topics are stated in the line—

“1. Judex; 2. Judicium; 3. Clerus; 4. Sponsalia; 5. Crimen.

“These are called simply *the Decretals*. All that precede them are cited by the Canonists as ancient.

“In 1294, Boniface VIII. published a Sixth Book of *Decretals*, called the *Sextum*, divided into five books, in the same order as the Compilation of Gregory. This contains the decrees of the two General Councils of Lyons (A.D. 1245 and 1274), also decrees of several other Popes, from Gregory IX. to Boniface VIII.

“The next collection was called the *Clementines*, because it contained the Constitutions of Clement V. adopted at the General Council of Vienne, 1311. These were published in 1317, by John XXII.” (pp. 226, 227.)

“All the decrees added to the Canon Law since that time are called *Extravagants*. Thus the text of the Canon Law consists of these books, in which the Popes did for the Church what Justinian did for the Roman Empire. The *Decretum Gratiani* was the Pandect. The Decretals were the Code. The Sextum, the Clementines, and the Extravagant were Novels of the Canon Law; and to complete the resemblance, in the year 1580, Paul IV. caused John Paul Lancelot to compose the *Institutes*, which were added to the *Corpus Juris Canonici* under Gregory XIII.” (p. 227.)—*Influence of Canon Law*, by J. G. Phillimore; *Oxford Essays*, 1858.

expression of which was the Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Pope Boniface VIII., wherein he “declared, affirmed, defined, and pronounced that it is altogether necessary for salvation that every human creature should be subject to the Roman Pontiff.”

That, by the permission of God, this system did good for a time I should be the last to deny. The great medieval Popes stand forth in history in a singularly grand attitude. Gregory VII. and Innocent III. were men such as the world has seldom seen. They fought the battle of Christian ideas against brute force, and loved righteousness and hated iniquity. These were uncritical days, and the forgeries were not always known to be such. Even the great St. Thomas Aquinas was deceived by some new fabrications of this sort^d. It was something to remove the cause of the oppressed from local influences. But on the strength of these very fabrications it was now sought to turn the Church into an absolute monarchy, of which the Pope was the head. Every decree of a Council, therefore, was inoperative till it had received Papal confirmation, and it was held that a plenitude of power, even in matters of faith, rested in the Pope alone, who was Bishop of the Universal

^d “A Latin theologian, probably a Dominican, who had resided among the Greeks, composed a *Catena* of spurious passages of Greek Councils and Fathers, S. Chrysostom, the two Cyrils, and a pretended Maximus, containing a dogmatic basis of these novel Papal claims. . . . It was thus, on the basis of fabrications invented by a monk of his own order, including a Canon of Chalcedon giving all bishops unlimited right of appeal to the Pope, and on the forgeries found in Gratian, that S. Thomas built up his Papal System, with its two leading principles, that the Pope is the first infallible teacher in the world and the absolute ruler of the Church. . . . The portion of his work against the Greeks on the primacy, he derived entirely from these fictions.”—*The Pope and the Council*, by Janus, pp. 264—267.

Church. He could be judged by no man. In the miserable tenth century, the century of Theodora and Marozia, the Papacy was so morally impotent that its power collapsed, though that it continued to exist at all attests the toughness of the institution. Even in South Italy the Patriarch of Constantinople was more powerful than the Pope of Rome^e, while over the East the great Nestorian Church, at this day shrivelled into a few communities in Kurdistan, outnumbered in its own area both Greeks and Latins^f; but no sooner did the Hildebrandean era commence, than the Roman power attained a height that the early Popes never dreamt of. It allied itself with righteousness and truth in the crushing of simony and in purifying the morals of the clergy. On the other hand, it allied itself with fraud and treachery, for falsifications and perversions were freely made use of to establish what was really a revolution in the constitution of the Church of Christ. So mixed are the best motives and purposes of man.

It is this system, in its grandeur and weakness, in the sublimity of its idea, in the weakness of its actual foundation, which the Vatican Council has stereotyped. From the beginning of its assertion there has ever been a current of opposition to it, notably exhibited in the Ghibelline spirit in Italy, in the great lawyer movement in France (headed by William of Nogaret), and in the course of action which animated the Councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basle. It greatly influenced

^e For an account of this, see *Dell' Origine progresso e stato presente del Rito Greco in Italia, osservato dai Greci Monachi Basiliani e Albanesi, libri 3 scritti da Pietro Pompilio Rodota*. Rome, 1758.

^f "Their numbers, with those of the Jacobites, were computed to surpass the Greek and Latin communions."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, ch. xlvii. p. 837, ed. London, 1834.

the Reformation, and has lived on in the Gallican school of theology within the Western Church to the present day. But grand as was the ideal of a Theocracy upon earth,—a reign of religion and justice in which the Pope ruled as Vicar of Christ upon earth,—not only did the system fail, but the abuses became insupportable. The Popes themselves became sinful^c. They were surrounded by a needy Curia, and it was soon found that gold was the most potent advocate in the Italian Court of Appeal. Besides direct bribes, there was a constant drain of money from the different countries of Europe. Every privilege had to be paid for,—confirmations of bishops and abbots, dispensations in causes matrimonial, appeals, concession of privileges,—all had their tax. Annats^b, first-fruits, and Peter's Pence, all found their way to Rome. Meanwhile the moral aspect of Rome became more and more distressing; the Pagan spirit penetrated

^c The great Dante, exponent as he was of the Catholic Philosophy of his age, thus speaks, addressing Pope Nicholas:—

“If reverence of the keys restrained me not,
Which thou in happier times didst hold, I yet
Severer speech might use. Your avarice
O'ercastr the world with mourning, under foot
Treading the good, and raising bad men up.
Of shepherds like to you, the Evangelist
Was 'ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,
With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld;
She who with seven heads towered at her birth,
And from her horns her proof of glory drew.
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight . . .
Ah, Constantine, to how much ill gave birth
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
Which the first wealthy father gained from thee.”

Inferno, c. xix. 106, Cary's Trans.

^b “Annata reditus unius anni ab eo qui recens in de mortui Episcopi aut abbatis locum succedit exsolvi summo Pontifici solitus.”—*Ducange, ad verb.*

the Vaticanⁱ. It was said that the man who went to Rome returned with an empty purse, an injured constitution, and a bad conscience. The Church was heathenized by the Renaissance. The Renaissance was consecrated in all its grace and refinement by Leo X., but true piety had fled from the earth, and for a hundred years before it was granted there was a cry throughout all Europe for a Council to remedy the abuses. The Curia resisted, until it was too late. Germany, Scandinavia, and England revolted, and then the Council was called—too late to prevent the schism being consummated. The dogmatic importance of the Councils of Constance and Basle cannot be exaggerated. Their results are still in the womb of futurity^k. Such were the scandals of the Church and the cry for reform, that at Constance three Popes were deposed, in spite of the faith in the system which had been so sedulously taught by the Curialists. Reform in the head and members was the cry of Europe. Nothing in history is so remarkable as the able way in which Martin V. recovered his position. Still, in the Acts of these Councils, a denial of the possibility of Papal infallibility being the universal tradition of the Church is written with a pen of iron. At Trent, the whole energy of the Italian party was exerted to prevent any definition of the power of the Pope or of the bishops, and as a matter of fact, they were able to stave off that reform in the Roman Court which they conceded to the rest of the Latin subjection. Then rose the Jesuit order, with its admirable organization, bending everything to the great

ⁱ Ranke's "Lives of the Popes," vol. i. p. 70, London, 1840.

^k "The momentous schism in the Church, the consequences of which are incalculable, and the effects of which are felt to the present day."—*Döllinger's Church and Churches*, p. 354.

purpose of the aggrandisement of the Roman see. Gradually, with the extension of the influence of that wonderful institution, Ultramontanism has advanced, till the whole Latin Church lies bound at its feet; and the nineteenth century, the age of science and freedom, has seen the hierarchy of Germany, against its expressed convictions, surrender at discretion¹. Henceforth Christianity must stand on a new dogmatic basis. The appeal to history is now heresy. The consent of the peoples is nothing, all depends on the will of one man, whose opinion, apart from the opinion of the whole body of Christ, is in itself irreformable. In the Roman Church, the head, as in the case of a hydrocephalous child, dwarfs the other members. The bishops have ceased to be judges of doctrine, and are now the Pope's vicars. Their jurisdiction as ordinaries is infringed by the authority of Rome, and by a strange irony, the instruments of civilisation, the telegraph and the iron way, carry the commands of the Apostle of reaction and obscurantism into the most distant villages and hamlets. The *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* is discredited for ever. There is one living oracle of God, from whose lips all men are to receive the truth. What effect this will have on the future dogma of the Church can hardly be estimated. If we may take as a specimen the proposal to declare of divine faith the corporal assumption of the Holy Virgin, we can only anticipate with sorrow further declensions from the simplicity of the Gospel; and in the question of morals, in view of the merging of the individual in the universal, there is a danger of narrowing the

¹ See *Documenta ad illustrandum Concilium Vaticanum, anno 1870, Gesammelt und herausgegeben von I. Friedrich, 1 abtheilung*, pp. 1—128, 247—262, 280.

ethics of Christianity to one virtue and to one vice — the virtue, submissive adherence to the Roman Church; the vice, separation from the same. Surely one may say of the dominant party, “Another such victory, and you are lost.”

Now, the question presents itself to us as Christians and as members of the English branch of the Church Catholic, Is this, in its present manifestation, the faith once delivered to the Saints? Is this the real and true interpretation of the passages in Scripture which refer to St. Peter? If it is of faith, it must have been part of the original revelation. Did the Apostles know anything of this? Did St. Peter himself realize his high destiny? There is not a trace in the Holy Scriptures of St. Peter being the one living oracle of divine truth. That our Lord gave him a certain primacy or pre-eminence; that he took the lead in the infant community, as is clear from the first chapters of the Acts; that he wrote from Rome, the mystic Babylon, and there, according to a most ancient tradition, sealed his testimony with his blood, we concede; but this is not the question at issue. In no exclusive or precise sense was St. Peter the pastor and doctor of all Christians, and his successor cannot claim from the divine assistance promised to him (*per assistentiam divinam ei in Beato Petro promissam*) to be what he was not^m. Neither can it be shewn that the office of Pope, in the modern sense, existed till many ages after Christⁿ. The see of Rome, on account of

^m “When St. Peter is referred to by name, in the early times, in connection with the Pope, it is for a guarantee of apostolical doctrine or discipline, not as having possessed, conveyed, or authorized to the Pope any personal supremacy.”—*Hussey's Rise of the Papal Power*, p. 12.

ⁿ “It cannot be maintained with truth, that the principles which

its civil pre-eminence as the capital of the world, as the scene and martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, as a Church that never had faltered in the faith, as the most important living embodiment of Christian tradition, was as a city set upon a hill, and its occupants were not slow in asserting these privileges to the uttermost (according to the Brocard,—*boni judicis est ampliare suam jurisdictionem*); but the most ambitious of these never dreamt of claiming to be the pillar and exclusive organ of divine truth, the venerable teacher of all Christians. The notion that certainty of faith is connected with the Pope, independently of the consent of the Church Catholic, is entirely foreign to the teaching of the early Church. For the one institution that touched the certainty of the faith was the Plenarium or General Council°. Synods were the places in which dogmatic questions were decided, and in the fourth century, when a Pope did speak, it was as the mouthpiece of his synod; nay, Pope Siricius refused to judge Bonosus because he had no right, and must await the decision of the provincial bishops.

And not only was this the common law of Christendom, but the Popes themselves rested their claims upon Conciliar authority, and it is one thing to claim power by Conciliar authority, another to possess it by divine right. You know how the Sardican Canons, regarded as a sort of outwork of those of Nicæa, were worked, in their own interest, by the Bishops of Rome, and rejected by those of Africa in the case of the presbyter Apiarius; and the Great St. Leo, at the

were asserted and acted on by later Popes were contained virtually and were latent in the Papacy of the earliest ages."—*Ibid.*, p. 200.

° See S. Augustine *De Baptismo contra Donatistas*, lib. i. c. vii. tom. ix. p. 57; also c. xviii. p. 63.

Council of Chalcedon, constant as was his assertion of his being the representative of St. Peter, rests his authority, not on any divine right, but, irrelevantly indeed, appeals to the sixth Nicene Canon^p.

Now, if Councils hold this position, what say the General Councils on this subject? At Nicæa Hosius, Bishop of Cordova, presided, but two presbyters from Rome represented that see. The sixth Canon merely says:—“Let the ancient usages prevail in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, so that the Bishop of Alexandria has the command over them. Since such is the custom of the bishop in Rome. So, in Antioch and the other Eparchies, the privileges are to be guarded for the Churches.” Another version much quoted, but not in the original text, asserts that the Church of Rome always had the Primacy. At Sardica, not a General Council, but one of great weight from the orthodoxy of the constituent bishops, the power of appeal was granted personally to Pope Julius, but in veneration of the memory of St. Peter. At the first Council of Constantinople, the West was not represented, but by the third Canon a privilege of honour, after the Bishop of Rome, was bestowed upon the Bishop of Constantinople, because it is the new Rome. At Ephesus, Pope St. Celestine, who took a prominent part in the Council, was represented by three legates—Arcadius and Projectus, bishops, and Philip, a presbyter—but no canons touched on his power or prerogative. At the Council of Chalcedon it was different. It was convoked by

^p “The Pope’s argument in all this was, that the Decree of Chalcedon concerning Constantinople, was contrary to the Canons of Nicæa, and that no Council could change what was decreed there.”—*Hussey’s Rise of the Papal Power*, p. 71; see also S. Leon, *Epistolæ*, xl. p. 257, ed. Lugd., 1700.

the Emperor Marcian. St. Leo was represented by four legates—Paschasinus of Lilybæum, Bonifacius, Lucentius, and Basilius, who took precedence of all the other bishops. His letter to Flavian was approved by the Council. When Dioscorus was condemned, the legate acting for the Pope and Council deprived him of his episcopal office. In the fifth Session, St. Leo's tome was accepted as symbolical, "on the express ground of its conformity to orthodox standards⁹." In the fifteenth Session, thirty Canons were passed, the twenty-eighth of which dealt with the privilege of Constantinople, the New Rome. It asserted that the Fathers properly gave the Primacy to the throne of the elder Rome, because it was the imperial city—that Constantinople was to be second after her—that the metropolitan of the Pontic, Asian, and Thracian dioceses, and the bishops of the aforesaid dioceses among the barbarians, were to be subject to Constantinople. The Roman legates refused to be present, quoted the false version of the sixth Canon of Nice, that the Roman see hath always had the Primacy; but they were overruled, and the Canon has always stood among the Canons of the Universal Church. St. Leo continued to oppose it, on the ground that it did injustice to the see of Alexandria. The legislation in these Councils shews a gradual increase of power on the part of the Popes. They exhibit the successors of St. Peter in a very dignified attitude, but they offer no support—nay, they contradict—the affirmation, that his decisions *ex cathedra*, on their own account, and not on account of the consent of the Church, cannot be reformed.

These four General Councils were regarded by Pope St. Gregory as an authority equal to the Gos-

⁹ Bright's "History of the Church," p. 404.

pels, and it was the same St. Gregory who, in opposing the assumption by John of Constantinople of the title of Œcumenical Patriarch, not only rebuked the Byzantinism and ambition of the prelate of New Rome, but condemned by anticipation the assumptions of his own successors. His words are:—“John, Bishop of Constantinople, in opposition to God and the peace of the Church, in contempt and to the injury of all the priesthood (bishops), exceeded the bounds of modesty and of his own measure, and unlawfully took to himself in Synod the proud and pestilent title of Œcumenic, that is, Universal (bishop).”^r Still, with every abatement, the position of the Popes during what I may term the Conciliar age was a very important one. The Edict of Valentinian supported them in the West by the aid of the secular arm. They had universally ascribed to them the duty of watching over the observance of the Canons, and informal appeals from the provinces, both of the East and West, flowed freely into the Eternal City. They were regarded, in view of their spiritual descent from St. Peter, as the types of unity, and the see of Rome was regarded confessedly as the first see and Patriarchate of the Christian Church.

Although this was the constitution of the Christian Church when St. Augustine converted the Saxons and founded those hierarchies which now exist in Scotland and England, the unceasing assertion of the Papal claims, aided, I mourn to say, by a series of fabrications^s which extend from the beginning of the sixth century—such as the Donation of Constantine,

^r Greg., Epist. ix. 68.

^s For an account of the forgeries after the Isidorian Decrees, see the “Pope and the Council,” by Janus, pp. 94—150.

the interpolation in the celebrated treatise of St. Cyprian on the unity of the Church^t, the *Liber Pontificalis* of Anastasius, and, above all, the Isidorian Decretals—gradually consolidated the Roman power through Continental Europe. And thus the institution of a primacy intended by God for the preservation of unity, as St. Cyprian bears witness, became by exaggeration the great cause of schism. The same fire which warms and sustains the body of man reduces it to ashes.

Beside the cause just mentioned, in England, other elements were at work. The insularity of its situation had always preserved there a strong national feeling. The Popes having adopted the Normans by the influence of such great men as Lanfranc and Anselm, the national element had rather maintained a conservative anti-Italianism, disturbed indeed by the moral effect of Archbishop Becket's murder. The bitter recollections of the national humiliation in the reign of King John were kept alive. The English kings carefully nursed the dislike to foreign interference^u. The Benedictine Order, existing in separate autocephalous communities, was very powerful in a conservative way. Above all, the schism in the Papacy, in which the two nations in this one

^t See Dr. Pusey's note to the Oxf. Trans. of St. Cyprian's Treatises, p. 150. See also an important note in Dr. John George Krabinger's edition of St. Cyprian's Treatise, p. 9, note 10 (Tubingæ, 1853), and the "Testimony of St. Cyprian against Rome," by G. A. Poole, pp. 17—22. (London, 1838.) In the celebrated edition of Berthold Rembolt, 1512, now very scarce, even the expression "super unum ædificat ecclesiam" is missed out. The Catechism of the Council of Trent, in its exposition of the Article on the Church, uses the uninterpolated text.

^u See the *Epistola Universitatis regni Angliæ*, addressed to Innocent IV. at the Council of Lyons, in Matthew Paris, p. 666.

island, England and Scotland, had taken different sides, had greatly weakened the Roman prestige, so that when the Reformation came there was more to appeal to in the way of tradition than in any country in Europe. There were more elements for an orderly and legal resistance. They had legally confirmed bishops and abbots without the Pope in former years; why not do so again?

Scotland had been more entirely under Papal influences^x. The Scottish Reformation was a revolution. It was a combination of the needy and grasping nobility, who coveted the Church lands, with the commonalty, who were sick of the vices of the clergy, against the bishops and the Crown, which ultimately made common cause with them^y. The Refor-

^x See the privilege of the Scotican Church, that it was subject to none but the Roman Pontiff, in a Bull of Pope Innocent to William the Lion, given in Fordun (*Scotichron*, lib. viii. c. 67, vol. i. p. 522, ed. Goodal): see also confirmation of privilege, "that none in the kingdom of Scotland shall exercise the office of Legate, except specially designed *a latere*."—*Theiner's Vetera Documenta Hibernorum et Scotorum*, Romæ, 1864, p. 49.

^y The corruption of our Church, I regret to say, was greater than in any part of Europe, except perhaps in Scandinavia. In the Provincial Council of Edinburgh, 1549, it is confessed, "Et cum duæ potissimum malorum causæ et radices appareant, quæ tantas nobis turbas et hæresium occasiones excitavere, nimirum in personis Ecclesiasticis, omnium fere graduum, morum corruptela ac vitæ profana obscenitas, cum bonarum literarum artiumque crassa inscitia." (*Statuta Eccl. Scoticanæ*, ed. Robertson, vol. ii. p. 81.) In the very scarce book of Conæus, *De Duplici Statu Religionis*, an author who was Cardinal *in petto*, and devoted to the cause of the Roman Church, we have the following sad picture: "Omnium malorum avaritia nobilium animos sensim invadens ita omnia infecit atque corrupit . . . abbate et Episcopos liberos vix natos et adhuc a matre rabentes designare . . . vulgus natura pigrum et iners . . . nil meus quam sacrosancti muneris Episcopi cogitabant, sed ventrem implere, symmata dilatare et sublimiora occupare subsellia . . . his

mation of the Church of England was in one sense a change in the law of the land, brought about by the Crown, with the aid of complaisant bishops, against the wish of the old nobility and the mass of the clergy, amid the indifference of the common people. Of all the forms of the Reformation, the English Reformation is the least interesting in a religious point of view; but for that very reason it was the most orderly. The substance of the old religion was retained; the Episcopate continued; the rectors and vicars lived on into the new system without any default in their legal tenure of office; the old monks became the new canons; the usurped jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome was removed in face of an equally unscriptural jurisdiction of the King of England; and, cleansed from many debasing superstitions, stripped of much of the beauty of external worship, the Church of England, by statute and by vote of Convocation, assumed that attitude of isolation from the Churches of the rest of Europe in which it has remained for more than 300 years.

A great act like the Reformation cannot fail to have its results both on the debtor and creditor side. Against the removal of abuses and the abolition of superstitions we must set the misery of schism and the results in the way of unbelief that sooner or later proceed therefrom. A carious tooth gives exquisite pain, and the time comes when at any cost it must be removed. The removal causes the pain to cease, but the natural arch of the mouth is destroyed, and the

omnibus accedebat libido impotens sacratoribus vitæ morumque lues teterrimæ. In multis sacerdotum ædibus scortum publicum: pernoctabant in tabernis viri Deo dicati: nec e sacrilego luxu tutus erat matronarum honos aut virginalis pudor . . . pro mendicantibus manducantes dicti fratres."

foundation of the gradual destruction of all the rest proceeds from that very removal. Now the carious tooth at the time of the Reformation was the aggression of the see of Rome into the jurisdiction of the bishops, the drain on the finances of the country by the costly exactions of the Curia Romana, and the gainful frauds countenanced by the friars, who by such devices as the miraculous rood of Boxley and the blood of Hales committed the high treason against religion of bolstering up what they conscientiously believed to be Christianity by lies. Much very alien from true science has been said with regard to the English Reformation. One party have regarded it as a second Pentecost, and a great mass of the English trace the first dawn of truth in England from the burning of Oldcastle, its actual rise from that of Latimer and Ridley in Oxford. Christianity became hopelessly corrupted in the fifth, fourth, or perhaps third century, as the intensity of the prejudice varies; and then there was total darkness till "Gospel light first beamed from Boleyn's eyes." An opposite school has from the days of Sanders denounced it as simple and unmitigated schism, unredeemed even by those qualities of national and religious enthusiasm which gave dignity to the movement in Germany and Switzerland. In every sense the separation was inexcusable; everybody was good and holy before the Reformation—everybody corrupt, earthly, devilish, after it.

The truth lies between these two views. It was neither so good nor so bad as people say. Indeed, in the practical life of the people there seems to have been little change either for better or for worse. The changes, though rapid, were not estimated in their real religious and political significance at the time. Be it never forgotten that the actual severance be-

tween England and Rome, was not the work of the Reformers, but of Warham and Gardiner. It was in the Convocation of 1531 that the clergy acknowledged Henry VIII. as “(Ecclesiæ) singularem protectorem, unum et supremum dominum et (quantum per Christi leges licet) SUPREMUM CAPUT ipsius majestatem recognoscimus.” There was no great and sudden outburst of godlessness, though it is known that the morality of the country suffered much. On the other hand, there was no great religious revival, nothing like the Wesleyan movement—for Puritanism came from Frankfort and Geneva. But one important thing must be borne in mind; the Reformation was not in all senses a new movement; it was rather the precipitation of elements that had long been held in solution in the English mind; it was, in fact, the separation of the traditional from the developmentistic elements in English religion. Both had hitherto been confused. The authority of the Church had welded all these things together, and the great political upheaving, aided by the revival of letters in the preceding half century, became the solvent. The Bible was now open, and men sought in vain for any support of that practical system of foreign interference whereby they were oppressed. They acted, as English do, in a practical and not theoretical way.

Henry VIII., indeed, and Thomas Crumwell, had their theory, and directed their efforts to one definite end. They desired that the religion of England should be Catholicism without the Pope. This would have answered but for the foreign influences. First, the charm which Luther exercised told profoundly in the way of unsettling people, and then the genius of Calvin erected a dogmatical system, so logical and harmonious that his Institutes remained for more than

a hundred years what the Schoolmen had been for the two preceding centuries. Moreover, the misery of the Marian persecutions did not end in the crime of burning a certain number of persons; it lashed the English into the fiercest Protestantism, and religion got closely allied to politics—Protestantism meaning the freedom and autonomy of England, Catholicism subjection to the all-powerful influence of Spain. Questions get hopelessly complicated. Men had not to ask themselves whether there were seven sacraments, but whether Elizabeth was an excommunicated bastard. Hence, when the Council of Trent was held too late,—and really treated theology in so scientific a spirit that explanations of the letter of her canons and decrees have been given so consonant with the early faith that any true son of the Church of England might accept them,—the Church of England, as she then was, was not represented. It is deeply to be regretted that she felt herself precluded from having her delegates there. Had England readjusted the balance between the different parties in the Western Church, the predominance of the purely Italian and Romanesque element might have been greatly neutralized, and more of the abuses would have been cured. As it is, in the matter of residence and practical reformation, the Council did a great deal, and it would be unjust and unphilosophical to ignore it. The Church of England then went her own way, and it cannot be denied that in doing so she suffered greatly. The factitious beauty with which the Reformation has been invested disappears before closer historical investigation. The State became as great a tyrant as the see of Rome had ever been. Discipline gradually fell into abeyance; the services and churches were deplorably neglected; learning died

out in the universities^z; open profligacy, especially in high quarters, remained unchallenged. No doubt some of the Puritans were personally religious men, and matters began to mend with the rise of the Caroline School.

But, accepting all this, there was something behind that justified the English Reformation, and that justification is found in the late proceedings of the Vatican Council. The English did not formulate any theological propositions as to the relations between the Pope and the Bishops, (if they had any definite opinion it was that he was Antichrist or the Beast, or the Man of Sin,) but they felt an intolerable abuse which must be got rid of at any price. They did what is now justified by the Council of 1870. That Council casts a retrospective shadow on the last three hundred years, indemnifying many irregularities. For the supremacy of the Roman see, which we have traced, finds its complement in the new doctrine of Infallibility, which asserts that "the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedrâ*, (that is, when exercising the office of the Pastor and Teacher of all Christians, he defines by his supreme apostolic authority a doctrine on faith or morals to be held by the whole Church,) by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, possesses that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be instructed in defining doctrine on faith or morals, and therefore the definitions of the said Roman Pontiff are in themselves, and not on account of the consent of the Church, incapable of being reformed."

^z Of the clergy of the reign of Elizabeth, Fuller says, "Alas! tolerability was eminency in that age."—*Church History*, vol. ii. p. 459, London, 1837.

This doctrine we utterly disbelieve. As members of the Anglican Church, we are in no sense bound by the Council. We were not summoned, and when no summons is issued no obedience can be expected. The Anglican Hierarchy was not summoned at all, and the Eastern Church in such terms as were only an insult. Whatever members of the Latin Church must say, we and the Greeks cannot hold the Council to be œcumenical. It is only a Council really œcumenical, and adjudged to be such by the after consent of the Church, that we are bound to obey. Moreover, the Council has plainly exceeded the powers even of an œcumenical synod. A Council cannot create new objects of faith. It may proclaim what is an article of faith, but only in accordance with Holy Scripture and tradition; and Christianity is a revelation, not a philosophy. It is impossible for a doctrine with such antecedents as the Papal Infallibility to have the elements of antiquity, universality, and consent, which the common law of Christendom has ever demonstrated as the guarantee of the truth of doctrine. It is again and again contradicted by the fact of History^a. Its antiquity dates from St. Thomas Aquinas, deceived by the forgeries of St. Cyril; its universality has been all but confined to one school of the Latin obedience; and its consent is measured by a tradition of continuous opposition from the day of its first promulgation till now.

But beyond the fact of our being formally exempt from the necessity of obedience to the Vatican Council, much remains for our consideration. Such an event is one of the most important in this re-

^a For a list of errors of Popes, see Dr. Pusey's "Is Healthful Re-union Impossible," pp. 186—246; also "The Pope and the Council," by Janus, pp. 51—63.

markable century. It will have the most profound influence on human thought. Its promoters have rightly calculated this, and we must believe that they have acted from a sincere desire of promoting the interests of Christianity. This is their panacea for the infidelity and materialism of the age. But will it succeed? I cannot think that the type of Christian life produced by the school of Infallibility will have the masculine strength to cope with the errors of the times, putting aside for a moment the truth or falsehood of the doctrine. On the contrary, I believe that it will tend to widen the gap that exists already between the intellect and the piety of Europe; that it will drive the educated classes into infidelity, and sap the foundations of the social order by erecting into dogma an impossible theory of life.

Under these circumstances, I cannot but think that our Church may have an important mission before it, if it be only true to faith and to itself. As, on the one hand, she commits the laity as terms of communion to nothing but the early simple Creed of the Apostolic times, so she also unites us in the bonds of sacramental union with the Church of the Fathers. Both the interests of freedom and of obedience are satisfied by her; both the ascetic and domestic lives have their place within her pale. To those whose natures incline them to do without the earthly helps laid up in the Church, she tells that perfect contrition takes the place of all ordinances of repentance; to those who require further comfort or counsel, she supplies the discipline of confession and absolution. Whatever is good in Protestantism—the love of the Bible, the magnifying the work of the Redeemer in the justification of the sinner, the individuality of the relations

that exist between God and man's soul,—all find free expression in her; on the other hand, all the tender and exalted sentiments of Catholicity—death to self, submission to external law, the cultivation of the æsthetic and sentimental parts of the soul—find a home within her. Still, there are many dangers ahead which we must guard against.

1. I have no faith in the line of liberality which is now being taken by many of our clergy. Liberality in religion—I do not mean tender and generous allowances for the mistakes of others—is only unfaithfulness to truth. There cannot possibly be two opposite opinions on the same religious subject equally well-pleasing to God. This is only conveying into theology the sophism of M. Vacherot and his compeers, “Le principe en vertu du quel une assertion n'est pas plus vraie que l'assertion opposée,” which has been so ably exposed by the Abbé Gratry^b. The only other plea for such liberality is the absolute uncertainty of all religious truth whatsoever, a positive destruction of everything in religion except the sentiment.

2. We must take care to free ourselves from all complicity in the false anthropology of the Reformation period. The great theologian Möhler has pointed out the similarity between the Protestant view of human nature with the philosophy of Gnosticism. In both was “there a glowing desire after eternal life, the deepest sense of human misery in general, and of the misery of sin in particular, but in both the sense of sin tended to its own destruction.” “The higher the degree of objective sinfulness is considered, wherein the subject sees himself involved without personal guilt, the more the magnitude of subjective self-committed sin disappears, and human nature is charged

^b See the *Petit Manuel de Critique*, Paris, 1866.

with the debt which the individual had contracted^c." A more accurate estimate of the conditions of Paradisaic man, and of his loss by the Fall, is necessary to a due estimate of the blessings of our restoration in Christ, and of the duties of love and service which flow therefrom. One of the reasons why the Evangelical system has failed is, that in the increased light of education, men see that it fails to meet the actual condition of the world. Both heathenism and Christendom exhibit phenomena which on its principles cannot be accounted for.

3. Furthermore, we must cultivate a more scientific spirit among our clergy. Unless they are well grounded in systematic theology, they must fail in doing their duty. We see what wonderful influence, both for good and for evil, Germany has had upon religion by this cultivation of the scientific methods. In spite of the evil which such books as Strauss's *Leben Jesu* have done, on the whole, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Germany in general in this matter; and now that the Catholic school has, in the main, been severed from the see of Rome, we have a closer interest than ever in it. The study of such books as those of Klee, Möhler, Dollinger, Alzog, Hefele, will do more for the clergy of the Church of England than any other course of study. I recollect Mr. Keble pointing out to me a fact which the Council has since verified, that the great work of Möhler's Symbolism was really the philosophic exponent of the principles of the English High Church party.

4. And such a scientific spirit will tell not only on our clergy, but on the laity. The thorough grasp of the Catholic system will not merely develope the reli-

^c Möhler, Symb., vol. i. p. 276, ed. Robertson.

gious life of both, but it will do more to meet the difficulties from physical science and biblical criticism than anything else. The Church system creates a kind of religious conviction which such objections as those excited by theories of the age of man, &c., have little influence upon. The difficulties are accepted just as we accept the patent fact of the mass of sin and misery by which we are surrounded. No one reasoning from the mass of sin and misery could arrive at the conception of an all-good, who is also an all-powerful, God. In pure reasoning such a permission would be a contradiction; still, on other grounds, all who call themselves theists accept the truth, the difficulty notwithstanding. Now this applies to the Catholic faith. We rest upon a sure foundation; certain things have by legitimate authority been defined to be true; we accept that authority, and therefore any scientific or biblical difficulties adjust themselves to this. We say, there they are—possibly, probably they may be true; but, whether accounted for or not, we take them simply as difficulties. From this point of view physical science and textual criticism become not merely innocuous, but highly useful. Every true fact must increase our sense of the magnitude of the glory of that God in whom on other grounds we believe; and, thus maintained in her proper place, Science may ever remain the handmaid of Faith.





